

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

IN

CHRISTIAN PRAISE.

BY A CANADIAN CLERGYMAN.



TORONTO:
JAMES BAIN & SON.
1880.

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I

PREFACE.

THE author of this tract does not expect all his Presbyterian brethren to endorse his views,—and he does not intend to quarrel with or extend the hand of friendship to them less warmly for that. Some of his most loved and respected friends, he knows, differ from him, as to the use of the organ in churches; but these friends, he also knows, are much too honourable to withdraw the hand of friendship from him, as a penalty for his outspoken sentiments.

Moreover, though the author has strong convictions on the subject of this tract, and states his ideas in strong language, yet he has also too strong a love to Christ and to the brethren that bear His image, to allow even his contempt for a “kist o’ whistles” in sacred praise, to prevent him worshipping with the children of the kingdom, where this bauble is considered essential to the service.

The author well remembers how strong, in his early days, was the sentiment of opposition to instrumental praise among both Presbyterian ministers and people. Ministers and people alike regarded it as a relic of Judaism. How the Church has now come to tolerate, and even approve of it, seems marvellous in his eyes.

If the Church of the present day is so much more enlightened, whence did she receive all her knowledge. The author has again and again wondered how or when all this literature, so convincing and so productive of results, came into the hands of the Church, for he cannot remember having seen it. The great argument, not forgetting the “nutshell” of Dr. Wallace, he takes to be the “no argument at all,” but popular favour; and ministers, in many cases, because they could not stop the stream, had to go along with it.

The tone of this tract may appear to some readers to be unseemingly bold, and even uncharitable, in the face of the growing use of organs in the worship of the Church. The author has no wish to be either bold or uncharitable, but only honest, in stating his views on this important question; and could he be convinced that the views which he has expressed here with so much frankness, are wholly false, and of a nature calculated to do harm in the present age, to the cause of the blessed Master, he would indeed be the first to commit this tract to the flames.

He trusts, however, that there is enough of truth within its pages to redeem it from so ignominious a fate.

The remarks also at the close, bearing on other things than the use of the organ, may not altogether be unprofitable.

As to the style of this tract, there has been no attempt at ornament of any kind; it is plain and purposely diffuse for the class of readers for whom it is intended.

The author hopes the tract will do good, even where its sentiments may be opposed, and tend to retard the departure of the Church from the simplicity of the faith, as delivered to the saints.

He also cordially recommends to the public perusal, tracts on the same subject by the Rev. Dr. Robb, late of Toronto, and the Rev. R. Johnson, of Kossuth, Iowa. These tracts, though differing considerably from that of the author in their modes of defending the purity of Christian praise, have nevertheless been found exceedingly useful to him.

ALEXANDER NICOL,

Ayton, Ont.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

IN

CHRISTIAN PRAISE.

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF SOUND, VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL, AS A MEDIUM OF
EITHER MENTAL EXPRESSION OR STIMULATION IN PRAISE.

*This analysis is purely special, and limited, of course, to the points involved
in the subsequent discussion.*

THERE are just two distinct uses to which colours may be put with which we are all familiar. (1) We may devise colours of a certain shape, and combining them into words, make use of them to represent and express the various ideas of our minds; or, (2) having a totally different object in view, we may make such a combination or disposition of these colours as to excite in us merely a sense of the beautiful. Here are two powers or uses totally distinct. Sounds are like colours in these respects. They have two distinct powers or uses. You can make use of them in speech or song to express the various ideas and emotions of the mind, or you can make use of them in such a way (melodiously) as merely to stimulate the purely æsthetic sense pertaining to melody in the mind. The disposition, etc., of the sounds, as well as the end in view, in each case is quite different. When multifarious mental expression is the object in view, the articulation, pitch, length, loudness, etc., of the sounds must be so disposed as to adequately convey the mental idea or emotion intended. When melody is the object in view, everything in the pitch, duration, strength, etc., of the sounds must be so disposed as to excite purely the one æsthetic sense appropriate to melody.

We make a distinction here between song and mere melody; because song, while it may or may not be melody, has powers of expressing or of addressing the multifarious ideas and emotions of the mind. Melody, considered merely as melody, has power to express or address only one purely æsthetic feeling of the mind analyzable into nothing else.

Let us, therefore, fix firmly in our minds distinct ideas of these two powers of sound, whether of speech, song, or instrumental music: (1) its power, composed as mere melody, to express or stimulate the one æsthetic sense of melody appropriate to it; (2) its power (differently composed) of expressing or addressing representatively the whole circle of ideas, sentiments or emotions of the mind, as fear, love, sorrow, etc., which have nothing purely æsthetic in their nature.

Analyzing song and instrumental music in conjunction, we find in them the following powers:—

I. Song and instrumental music possess in common the power of melody, and in this respect they are both alike capable of either stimulating the sense of melody or of expressing it.

II. Song possesses fully the power of expressing or of addressing all the multifarious ideas and emotions of the mind; because (1) in song we can articulate words representative of the ideas, etc., and (2) in song, just also as in speech, we can use such tones of the scales, major or minor, and such length, loudness, etc., as are naturally suggestive of, or appropriate to, the sentiments which we wish to express; thus in song, as in speech, a plaintive tone is appropriate to sorrow, a high note to joy, a low note to intense feeling, etc.

The chief element of all such expression lies, however, in the power of articulation, as the pitch, length, and general character of the tones, used by one person to express a particular emotion, often vary widely from those of another person expressing it, and the tones of the same person even differ in these respects at different times.

Wide license is often allowed in these respects both in singing and in speech, the same tone is often used to express sentiments widely different. Our best orators also differ widely from one another in this matter.

III. Instrumental music possesses, only in a most limited degree, the power of expressing or of addressing the multifarious ideas and emotions of the mind; because (1) in instrumental music the articulative power, which is found to be the chief element of multifarious mental expression, is wholly wanting; and (2) though the second element of such expression, which consists in pitch, length, loudness, etc., of tone, is possessed by it, yet as we have already seen, these properties of mere tone are so variable and uncertain in their character, that, divorced from articulation, they are next to useless as an exponent of the general sentiments of the mind.

So far then as this second element of multifarious mental expression, which is the only one possessed by instrumental music, is concerned, if it be possible by means of it to convey a general idea at all, it will do it so vaguely or indefinitely as to be at the best but a good help to a guess. In listening to an instrument playing an air which is intended to express or to stimulate gratitude, I may possibly gather gratitude from it, or as likely I may think it expresses something else, or I may put ideas into it and make it express what I please.

But suppose, what is not likely to happen, that I should conceive it to mean gratitude, it leaves me completely in the dark as to whom gratitude is to be expressed, as to what I am to be grateful for, and to a thousand other vague conjectures. Now the power of articulation possessed by song leaves me to no such vain guesses.* Instrumental music then, as an element of general mental expression, is comparatively valueless. So far as multifarious mental expression is concerned, an attempt to supplement the expressive power of the voice in song by so futile a help as a man-made instrument, is like the attempt to add to the expressive powers of a living face by setting up alongside of it a huge, unshapely profile of man's own invention. If we wanted help to express generally our mental ideas or emotions, we should certainly least of all choose so worthless a help as instrumental music to enable us to do so. The extent an instrument can afford any help of this kind, depends wholly on its power to imitate the tones of the human voice; but, setting aside the power of articulation, which it lacks,

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this power of expression is small indeed. Certainly the power of general mental expression, if that is looked to alone, as it should be, is not only not assisted but materially hindered by the use of any instrument. For if we use an instrument to swell or augment the volume of sound in praise, then that drowns the articulation of the singers, a thing of greater importance than itself; if we use it either equal to, or less in volume than the human voice, then it augments the sound only to the extent of one good singer, and besides at the same time, from its want of articulation, only mays or renders less distinct the articulation of such as declare God's praise with the superbly expressive powers with which God has furnished them.

If it is mere noise that is wanted, possibly something more suitable than even an organ might be tried; we would suggest a trumpet or even a ram's horn, and allow the blower to make the sound as uncertain as he pleased. But it is not mere noise that is wanted, neither is it mere melody, but pure expressive power of the praiseful feelings of the heart, love to God, joy, gratitude, etc., and this expressive power in the highest excellence abides alone in the songful, God-made voice, which expression the organ, from want of articulation, really hinders more than it helps.

To our mind, the service which an organ is conceived to render in praise is precisely parallel to that of an instrument which might be invented to assist in prayer, viz.: to swell the minister's tones, give sounding emphasis where he gives it, make loud sonorous "Ohs!" where he makes them, and groan as it best can where he groans. It would give sensuous effect to the service certainly, but alas for the expression.

At this stage of our remarks, however, it is proper to observe that, though instrumental music, as compared with vocal, is well nigh useless as a means of general mental expression; yet, as noticed in the first part of our analysis, there is one power which it possesses to a like degree with vocal music, namely, the power of making melody; and in this respect both vocal and instrumental music are alike capable of either stimulating or expressing the æsthetic sense appropriate to it. But the sense of melody, or of beauty of sound, is only one feeling of the mind, and it is purely an æsthetic one, analyzable into no other affection of the mind, and has little or nothing to do with the holy joy, love, admiration, and other pious emotions of a sanctified heart, which constitute praise. Therefore, what stimulates or expresses merely the sense of melody, may by no means excite or express a single emotion of praise. The mere melodious power of voice or instrument, therefore, has nothing to do with praise. It is neither praise itself, nor has it power either to express or stimulate it. Whenever, therefore, we introduce the mere melody-making power, as a something essential in praise, we introduce what is wholly extraneous to it. Mere melody of song is of no more use in praise than mere melody of speech in prayer. Were this not the case the best prayers and the best praise would come not from the greatest piety, but from the best musical talent.

But let us now look more particularly at the essential elements of praise in worship. What is praise?

Praise is the making of melody in the heart. It has its fountain in the human soul. It consists of thoughts and feelings. It is the holy joy, love, gratitude, adoration, etc., of a sanctified heart moving upward to God under the stimulation of God's Word and Spirit; the fragrance of a pious soul under the warming glow of God-sunshine returning heavenward to the sun himself.

The materials of praise are not made up of sounds at all. They are composed of devout thoughts and feelings. Prayer is felt need or desire expressed to God; praise is felt fulness and gratitude expressed to God. The former implies vacancy in the creature and inflow from the Creator; the latter implies offering and outflow from the creature returning to the Creator. While praise

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may be regarded as the exuberant fragrance of a plant, diffusing itself sunward, prayer may be conceived of as the absorption of the sunbeam necessary to its life and growth. Both praise and prayer are exercises of the Christian graces. Both imply communion with God. But prayer is representative of the sacrifice on the altar waiting for the descent of the holy fire that is to consume it; while praise is the hot glow of that sacrifice already on fire, and radiating heavenward.

But while we have been at some pains in this way to bring before the mind a true idea of the spirituality of praise as it should be offered to God, it may not be out of place to give a more concise definition of it.

Definition.—The praise of Christian worship is the holy joy, love, gratitude, adoration, etc., of a sanctified heart appropriately expressed to God; that is, expressed by those powers of voice, etc., which God has given man for the purpose of expression.

True praise may be expressed through the medium of speech or song, or in the heart, without either; but as our lips are part of our physical nature given us for expression, it is quite suitable that we should use the voice as an expression, not as a part of praise. And when we praise God in concert with others, it is absolutely necessary that we should make this use of the lips in order to promote concert of thought and feeling with our fellow-worshippers. In praise also, the lips must be used in song, as song affords the only method in which a number of voices can be kept in concert; and besides, song suitably expresses the praise of the heart. A concert of voices in mere prosaic speech means a repetition of Babel, and that as a medium of praise in the church, is impossible.

It follows from these things that concert of voices in prayer without confusion is impracticable, and the prayers of the people have to be led by the voice of the minister alone. If prayers could always be sung, then all the congregation might pray aloud; but this would require a new song, expressive of the particular wants of every occasion, to be composed by the minister every week; and besides being set to music, copies would have to be printed and distributed in the pews every Sabbath, a work that neither minister nor people would be capable of accomplishing, however willing. But we must remember here besides, that the natural language of prayer is not song but prosaic speech. Prayer is the earnest, impatient outcry of a needy soul. It is abrupt and anxious in its language, and while appropriately expressed in prosaic speech, it has usually little or no harmony with the slow, measured cadences of song; while praise, on the contrary, is the satisfied, leisurely outflow of the soul, and finds its natural expression in the soft, solemn, or long-drawn sonorous utterance of song. The mental state of prayer is best expressed by speech; the mental state of praise is best expressed by song.

We would not wish it to be inferred from these arguments that we countenance, in any way, the same silence on the part of the worshipper during praise as in prayer. We can all praise God aloud in concert through song, the natural language of praise, but we cannot all pray aloud to God in concert through speech, the natural language of prayer, without absolute confusion.

There should always be concert in the gatherings of the Lord's people; and this concert is always best promoted by outward expression when it is possible; when it is not possible without confusion, as in the case of prayer, it is secured by the voice of the minister alone. It is always natural to give outward expression to the thoughts and feelings, and God has provided in His Church full scope to all that is instinctive and natural to our hearts, so far as is consistent with decency and order.

With these preliminary explanations as to the nature of praise, we may now examine still more particularly how sound or vocal expression stands related to it.

There are just three relations in which melody, song, or sound can be con-

ceived of as necessary to praise: (1) either as an element itself of praise; (2) as a means of stimulating praise in the heart; or (3) as a means of expressing it.

I. In the first place, melody or song that is mere musical sound is not an essential element of praise, for melody divorced from the words or ideas with which it is usually associated, is only mere physical sound, beautiful sound it may be, and pleasing to the human ear, but after all but a mere series of air waves, utterly devoid of all thought and feeling, falling in soft and regular movements on the human ear. Praise, on the contrary, is composed of thought and feeling, and has moral quality; mere sound, dealing purely with the physical, has physical quality but no moral quality whatever. Mere sound, therefore, can never justly be reckoned praise, however beautiful, else would the sweet song that wafts to the heavens the inner melody of a pious heart be alike in moral quality, if alike in melody, with the foul emanation of the unclean lips of the brothel. The melodious qualities of both being alike, if mere music is to be considered an essential part of praise, it follows that the praiseful qualities must dwell alike in both, a theory that few will care to endorse.

II. Neither can it be successfully maintained (1) that mere melody, that is sound vocal or instrumental, composed or disposed of merely as melody, can stimulate in the heart a single element of praise. Melody is unquestionably a stimulant of æsthetic feeling. The linked sweetness and the soft and measured cadences of song do flood the chambers of the soul with a soft and tender feeling appreciative of the sound, but which is in no sense analyzable into an element of praise. It is neither the holy joy, gratitude, nor any other emotion of a sanctified heart. It is, on the contrary, a feeling which in many cases may be more perfectly aroused and enjoyed by the heart untouched by grace, than by those who have drunk most deeply at the wells of salvation.

An adept in the musical art will feel the powers and enjoy the melody infinitely more than many a less tutored Christian whose heart overflows with the melody which God will accept. Not a few hearts, we believe, full of bitter enmity to Christ have been touched even to tears by the melody of a sweet song that speaks the praises of His love; and yet, amid all this flow of feeling, the enmity to Christ remained as bitter as ever. Not one emotion of a truly sanctified heart was excited, but simply an æsthetic and sensuous feeling which overcame the man for the time. Music has certainly power to touch an æsthetic chord in our nature, but not a spiritual one.

Until the sensuous and æsthetic is clearly distinguished from the supersensuous and spiritual, men will always be in danger of confounding the one with the other, and of imagining there is praise in their hearts to God when there is only a flow of sensuous feeling.

This sensuous feeling is, we readily grant, a pleasing concomitant of praiseful thought and emotion, but it is by no means an element of either. The air we breathe is indeed pleasing to the senses of men, but it is the fragrance which it conveys from the unfolded petals of the pious soul, that alone is pleasing to God. Our failures in praise, arise chiefly from lack of fragrance in the heart, not from lack of melody in expression; and though song composed or disposed of as an instrument of general mental expression may suitably express praise, yet composed or disposed of merely as melody, it can neither express nor stimulate a single praiseful emotion of the soul. Mere melody, whether vocal or instrumental, is just as fit to stir unholy emotion as that which is pure and well-pleasing to God. There is nothing in all the music of the gamut to arouse a single holy affection. Faith, hope, and charity are all functions of a renewed nature, and are fundamental elements of true praise; yet it is only by the friction of holy or of Bible thoughts that they can be stirred into exercise, and plain articulative song (or even speech) is more capable of conveying such thoughts to the mind, than the most elaborate efforts of harmony, yea infinitely more so, for

much of our harmony is so inarticulate, that all distinct enunciation of thought is completely smothered out in the mere gush of sound; and superficial worshippers are only too apt to conclude that with the mere gush of sound and sensuous feeling combined, they are offering to God the elements of praise. Now we are bound to say that no quality of sound however beautiful and no form of æsthetic emotion arising from it, however rapturous, constitutes a single element of praise.

(2) Song or instrumental music, that is sounds vocal or instrumental, composed or disposed of as a means of expressing the general ideas and emotions of the mind, may be helpful to some extent as a stimulative of praise in the heart.

These sounds are very often melody, yet it does not follow that in composing them as a vehicle of expression they are to be composed as purely melody. Song, besides being the natural method of expressing praise, possesses, in virtue of articulative and tonic elements vested in it, powers of general mental expression to a perfect degree; instrumental music, devoid of articulation, and possessing tonic power only sufficient to imitate faintly the tones of the voice, is a most inadequate means of expression; and as it is by its power of general mental expression alone that it can be stimulative of praise in the heart, its stimulative influence is small indeed.

Of course vocal and instrumental music, used merely to stimulate praise in the heart, are no part of praise in themselves. But supposing that during praise, we should use both as a means of stimulation, and strive by expressing aloud through them scriptural and spiritual ideas to excite sentiments of true praise in the hearts of ourselves and others, it is evident that while song would be helpful in this case, instrumental music would be a perfect failure, as its tonic power, however used, would drown articulation and hinder the object in view infinitely more than it would help it.

III. It is only when we come to consider song or music as an expression of praise that we can distinctly recognize its true place in Christian worship. On a preceding page we defined the praise of Christian worship as the holy joy, love, gratitude, adoration, etc., of a sanctified heart appropriately expressed to God. Now song or music, used as an outward or suitable expression of sanctified or praiseful ideas becomes indeed, according to our definition, a necessary element of praise. The praise of the heart could not be the praise of Christian worship, unless it were offered; in other words, as the lamb to be offered cannot become the sacrifice till it be laid on the altar, so the spiritual joy, love, etc., of the heart in order to constitute or to be the praise of Christian worship must be appropriately expressed.

It might in many cases be appropriately expressed in silence; but while worshipping in concert with a crowd of fellow-worshippers, it is suitably expressed by the God-made lips in song, by the very instrument with which God has endowed men for that purpose.

Here it is at once evident that all instrumental music, being inarticulative, is comparatively valueless.

Instruments at the same moment are just as capable of expressing unholy feeling as they are that which is holy and pure, that is, if we are pleased to put ideas of any kind into the sounds they produce; for excepting their power as a vehicle of mere æsthetic feeling, which is no part of praise, and that of a glum, tonic imitation of the human voice, of all genuine elements of general mental expression they are utterly devoid. Could we prefix and append consonants to the vowel sounds which they represent, we might possibly endow them with the powers of articulation necessary to the expression of praiseful ideas; but even then their use would be a sad departure from the pure and simple praise ex-

pressed by that divinely-made instrument, the human voice. Praise from the heart of man, uttered in its natural way by the God-made lips of man, is true praise.

We might say that as of old a human tool applied to the stones of the altar polluted it, so the application of instruments to God's praise pollutes it under this dispensation, in which Christian worship is purely spiritual and devoid of all useless concomitants.

Under the Mosaic dispensation in which the purely spiritual of the gospel was presented under a formidable array of altars, sacrifices, outward types and ceremonies, we can easily find a befitting place for instruments of music. But that dispensation which had its headquarters at the temple has been all swept away, and we live in an age in which we may worship God here as well as at Jerusalem, but they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. See John iv. 23.

But the utter unfitness of instrumental music as the exponent of praise, will become more evident as we again review the suitability of song for the same end.

So far as speech, song, or sound is concerned as an instrument of expression, it is, as was stated in our analysis, precisely analogous to colour or form. We may, by means of colours of a certain shape, produce letters and words, by which we express our conceptions or emotions; or we may make such a combination of these colours, as will produce in us a sense of the beautiful—a sweet, pleasing emotion of the mind which we call the sense of the beautiful, and which will analyze into nothing else. As an instrument of expression, mere beauty of form or colour in the composition of the words is a matter purely extraneous to the object in view. The great function of expression is that which we chiefly care for. As an instrument, however, for either stimulating or expressing mere æsthetic feeling, soft and pleasing combinations of form and colour are everything; by supreme attention to these alone, we seek to excite in ourselves or others a sense of the beautiful.

Precisely similar to this are the uses which we make of sound. As an instrument for the general expression of human thought and feeling, we care chiefly for the distinct and clear; its melodious qualities are entirely outside of the object which we have in view. We prolong and emphasize the syllables representative of the more important ideas, making breaks in the sentences where the sense requires it, and giving the rising or falling inflection where the sense is imperfect or complete.

The pitch, tone, length, and volume of the sounds are ever variable and in keeping with the varying character and strength of the emotions which they represent.

The above remarks referring in the first place to prosaic speech, are also applicable to the expression of our ideas in song. When emotions of a deep, fervent, or solemn character predominate in our minds, the natural tendency of our minds, is to glide away from prosaic utterance into that of song, and to seek expression in long, swelling, sonorous tones which may, or may not, constitute melody. The human mind seems to find in this vehicle of expression more liberty, scope, power, or at least something more in harmony with the pent up tide of feeling within it, and wells forth the warm assurance of faith from the fountains of the soul in loud triumphant tones, responsive gratitude in the low and earnest, and gushing love and pity in the soft and tender. The tones representative of these and other feelings, even in song, may or may not be melody. In many cases they are melody, but in others they are not; and it does not follow, that because they express songfully the praiseful emotions of the soul, these same tones should be expected either to stimulate or express the purely æsthetic or sensuous of our nature, that has little in common with praise. The composi-

tion of tones in a song, with a view to its best expression of praise; would be a very different thing from their composition with an aim to the best musical effect.

From the foregoing considerations, we think then, that as it is the expressive use of song, and not the æsthetic one, that is necessary in praise, it will be evident that the organ or other instruments of music which are capable mainly of an æsthetic use alone, are wholly unsuitable and useless for purposes of praise. Vocal and instrumental music have the melody element in common; both may alike stimulate or express æsthetic or sensuous feeling; but song alone has power to express the spiritual joy, love, etc., which constitute praise. The relation, in these respects between expression and melody in song, is well illustrated in the functions of colour in a picture. The general aspect of the colours, æsthetically considered, may or may not be beautiful; but with a view to their expression, it is not this that I think of, but of the things reflected or represented by them on their surface.

But to speak of the unsuitableness of instrumental music as a means of praiseful expression in a system of worship purely spiritual, is a very mild way of putting our objection to its use. Instruments are not only unsuitable, but they are a positive hindrance to adequate mental expression. If praise is to be expressed to God, as it should be, why not express it, as we do our prayers, with the voice of His own workmanship. He does not need the tonic power of an organ which is only faintly imitative of the human voice to help Him to understand us; if He did, the tonic power of the instrument would smother the articulation of the singer and hinder infinitely more than it would help all proper expression. If organs are to be used as a medium of expression between ourselves and our fellow-worshippers, for the same reason, they would prove a positive hindrance, if they are to be used merely as a melody making power. God does not care for the music of such imperfect instruments, but He cares for the melody or praise of the heart.

As to the abuse of money expended by congregations in the purchase and employment of such instruments we shall say little. It is money flung away, in many cases, merely to furnish an opportunity to our accomplished sons and daughters to display their musical gifts.

If then the praise of divine worship is the holy joy, love, etc., of a pious heart expressed to God; if then instrumental music, in the first place, composed as melody, can neither prove in itself an essential part of praise nor express or stimulate it, and in the second place, composed as an instrument of general mental expression, it is so unsuitable and worthless in respect of the same services, we cannot avoid being forced to the conclusion that the human voice alone is the proper instrument to use in the praise of God. It is, in the first place, the natural and God-given instrument of expression to all our thoughts and feelings; and in the second place, it can do this more perfectly than any instruments of man's device. (1) We give expression to the praise of our hearts aloud, in order that we may render this praise in concert with other worshippers, and (2) we do so in song, because song is the natural method of expressing it; besides it affords the only possible way of keeping our tones in unison with those of our fellow-worshippers, and thereby avoiding mere discordant clamour. The mere outward melody is no more an element of praise than the mere roughness, smoothness, or elocutionary style of a speech or argument is an element of the syllogistic premises in the argument itself. We have just as much right to say that the argument so delivered is a bad argument, or that the earnest prayer, uttered with a rough voice, is a bad prayer, as we have to say that the praise offered in unmusical tones is bad praise. The true praise mounts straight to the throne of God; the mere expression of it dies a few yards from the door.

Instrumental music is a most useless concomitant of praise; as to expression, not required, inadequate if required; as to melody, outside of praise, sensuous and unsuitable under this dispensation, in which divine worship is stripped of all the swaddling bands of the sensuous and ritualistic, and they that worship God must do so in spirit and in truth.

Æstheticism is not praise. It awakes within me no holy joy, love, or gratitude to God, no supersensuous or purely religious feeling. I must look to the influence of God's Holy Spirit for this, and to the friction of the holy thoughts which come to me in the language of inspiration.

In anticipation of a question that might be asked as to what would be the peculiar characteristics of song composed mainly with a view to general mental expression, and with little attention to melodious effect, we would answer, that it would still be song, and it would have a great deal of melody in it too, just as in speech certain passages properly read have often a great deal of melody in them.

Passages of a plaintive character, require plaintive tones—the light and joyous, tones high, brisk, and cheerful—the tender and sympathetic, tones low and sweet.

Song possesses all these characteristics in common with speech; although it differs from speech in possessing more of the sonorous. Song composed thus with a view to mental expression will possess often a great deal of melody, although the latter is not the thing chiefly sought.

Many of the tunes used by our fathers possess the general mentally expressive character as much as we would wish, and have a great deal of melody in them besides. "Walsall," "Coleshill," etc., are powerfully expressive of tender, plaintive feeling, and have very much melody in them too. "French," "Old Hundred," and a host of other old tunes are powerfully expressive of certain sentiments and emotions. We need not enumerate a great many others, favourites with our fathers, which now have been discarded from congregational use, in a fool's hunt after simple melodious effect, a thing of purely secondary consequence in Christian worship.

We now conclude this part of our discussion by summing up briefly some of the more important points confirmed in the foregoing pages:—(1) That the praise of divine worship is the holy joy, love, etc., of a pious heart, appropriately expressed to God. (2) That song in praise, is necessary only as a proper vehicle of expression to the praiseful sentiments of the heart. (3) That song in praise should be calculated like speech in prayer, to give the highest expression to the sentiments. (4) That mere melody of voice or instrument has nothing to do with praise either in the expression or stimulation of it. (5) That it is articulative and tonic power that constitute in song, as in speech, the elements of general mental expression. (6) That musical instruments possessing tonic power alone, and this also only faintly imitative of the voice, express little, and by adding to the volume of sound, confuse and mar more than they help all expression. (7) That instrumental music, quite proper in a symbolic ritualistic system of worship, is wholly unsuitable in a system simply spiritual, in which praise is naturally and adequately expressed with the divinely bestowed human lips.

Leaving now the treatment of instrumental music as seen in its semi physical and metaphysical aspects, we shall find our views as to its merits, fully confirmed by an examination of the Word of God.

I. In order, however, fully to understand the relations which instrumental music has at various times sustained to the solemn worship of God, it is necessary to make some preliminary scrutiny of the characteristics of the two leading dispensations of the covenant of grace; in other words, to point out the peculia-

rites of the ritualistic or Old Testament form of worship, as contradistinguished from the purely spiritual or New Testament method of divine service.

When a teacher wants to convey to the minds of the young, or very ignorant, a distinct idea of things of which they have the most imperfect knowledge, and the furniture or elements of knowledge in their minds are so limited as scarcely to supply the necessary ideas out of which he may elaborate the conceptions of the things which he wishes them to know, he very usually has recourse to pictures, types or symbols, outward physical illustrations, or models, as furnishing the very kind of means most efficient in accomplishing his end. A child that has never seen a ship or an elephant, will know more of either from a model or a picture than from any amount of description. An ignorant, uncultivated person will know more of the abstract idea of substitution by the practical example of one creature being made to suffer for the misdeeds of another, than from a whole volume of metaphysical disquisition on the same subject. As a means of leading the mind to a clear conception of things abstract and obscure, this method of object teaching is incomparably superior to all others. As the mind advances in the elements of knowledge, and passes more and more from the regions of the mythical and obscure into those of clear light, this method of object teaching is less and less required. Things become clear without it.

We need not wonder, then, that God adopted this method in teaching the early Church. There has never been but one gospel given by God since the fall; and that gospel preached in Eden, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," is identical with that of the New Testament, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But though only one gospel and one spiritual worship, yet God has been pleased to have it taught to the Church in two different ways. In Old Testament times it was taught by object lessons involving a vast mass of ritualistic observances, and in the New Testament times of fuller light, by the simple and unencumbered method of preaching. The Mosaic law, or economy of worship, was just the divinely instituted method of preaching the gospel to the Hebrew Church.

This plan of worship and teaching was not at all new in Moses' days; it was instituted at the Fall; for sacrifices, offerings, types, and others of its rites were observed by all the pious among the patriarchs, from Abel down to Moses. Though this system of objective worship was undoubtedly set up at the Fall, it was when the Hebrew Church was set up in the wilderness, that this plan of object teaching or of preaching the gospel of Christ, was written, put into a regular code, renovated, or perhaps, put into more elaborate shape. It was full of types, rites, and ceremonies, all outwardly physical and sensuous in their nature, all entering fully into the forms of worship, and veiling within them, as within awaddling bands, all that was real and spiritual of gospel worship; and yet every one of these types, etc., though outward and sensuous, was so intensely representative and suggestive of that which it was intended to imply, that the real and spiritual of the gospel within these types could scarcely fail to be seen. The outwardly objective and physically pictorial so entered into all the public worship and teaching of the Church, that even the moderately intelligent of the godly, could scarcely fail to be familiar with their outward form, or their inner meaning.

This objective system of worship and teaching instituted at the Fall, and afterwards embodied in the Mosaic ceremonial when the Hebrew Church was set up in the wilderness, most effectually did its work. The spiritual signification shone through the outward physical and sensuous types and symbols, and still the light increased.

Prophets of God also, by their inspired writings, were continually adding to the extent of the sacred canon, which being read to the people, had a still

further tendency to give the people a distinct idea of the spirituality of God's kingdom, and of that spiritual element of worship which alone could make it acceptable to Him. And just as might be expected, we find that as light increased, and as the spirituality of God's kingdom and worship became more distinctly recognized, men began to meet and worship God more in the simple spiritual fashion. Though attending the stated services of the temple, where they offered sacrifices and took their part in the rites, etc., of the ceremonial system, they now met in synagogues or places of convocation, in which without either sacrifice, rite, or instrumental music, the Scriptures were read and expounded, praises sung and prayers offered, just as is now done in the Christian Church (we mean the Church in which all ritualism is flung aside).

The synagogue was thus the true progenitor of the Christian Church. Its simple spiritual form of worship, void of all extraneous physical helps, was that whereon Christ framed that of the Christian Church. During the first four thousand years of the world, the spiritual elements in God's worship and kingdom had been coming more and more to the front in the human mind, and the synagogue form of worship had come with it, until the Lord Jesus Christ at His advent, having in all respects honoured by His own personal observance the objective and ritualistic system first instituted by God, at once swept all that away, and bringing the synagogue and its simple spiritual method of worship to the foreground, gave to it ever thereafter all the authority and importance of the system which it had superseded—John iv. 23: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

How early synagogues were set up is not here a matter of great moment; it is evident, however, that they were of early origin. In the seventy-fourth Psalm, written for Asaph in the days of David, it is recorded of the wicked that "they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land," and the apostle James, speaking at the assembly of Jerusalem, declares that "Moses of old time, hath in every city, them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." After the captivity synagogues increased; and it is well known that in the days of our Lord there were an immense number of them in Palestine.

The method of worship then instituted by Christ in the Christian Church, being like that of the synagogue, is purely spiritual; all altars, all sacrifices, all incense, all musical instruments, &c., are flung aside, and men now, without external helps of any kind, give God the pure worship of the soul, praise and prayer, expressed in the simple natural way by those lips with which God as their creator has endowed them—John iv. 24: "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

We have thus briefly reviewed the two economies, God's two methods of worship, and of teaching or preaching the gospel, (1) by object lessons or outward physical representations of spiritual things, and (2) by the simple New Testament system of worship and preaching, which first appeared in the Synagogue and was finally, by Christ's authority, made to take the place of the more umbrous method of the first dispensation.

These preparatory remarks on the two divine methods, fit us for seeing more intelligently the bearing of the Scriptures on the question of instrumental music in the praise of the Church at the present day. We think, that the true position of instrumental music will be all the more evident from what we have said, and that now it will be easier to shew abundant evidence

II. That instrumental music was symbolical in its meaning, and was in perfect keeping with the ceremonial code of which it formed a part.

As we find in Scripture that instrumental music, when made use of at all in connection with the regular solemn worship of God, is used invariably in connection with that outward, pictorially-representative economy with which it was in

harmony, and in no case is used in connection with the simple, clear, and purely spiritual economy which sprang out of it and superseded it. This should be argument enough for the present disuse of all instrumental music in worship, and it would by no means invalidate the argument for its present disuse even supposing we should be unable to point out its precise typical signification as connected with the preceding economy. We know that the form of worship in the present dispensation is not a typical, an outwardly objective or sensuous, but a spiritual one; and that is sufficient reason why instrumental music, which is sensuous, typical, and non-spiritual, should have no place in it, and that instruments of music should be put on the shelf along with the candlesticks, tongs, and snuff-dishes of the Jewish temple. There are not a few things clearly a part of the former economy, and alone pertaining to it, the precise typical meaning of which we are now unable to tell; and we may now be as ignorant of their import, as we should have been that Hagar was a type of Sinai which gendereth to bondage, had not this fact been incidentally revealed to us by Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians.

We are not reduced, however, to the strait of taking for granted that instrumental music had a typical or symbolical use, or of merely guessing what its typical import might be; for we think both are clear enough from scripture. The very nature of instrumental music, as outward, sensuous, and in no wise necessary or helpful to the expression of true praise, proves its symbolicality and perfect harmony with objective teaching.

Then again the fact that it was used in connection with the ritualistic or ceremonial system, and never in any case with the simple spiritual method of the synagogue or New Testament, shews its symbolic character and general identity with the former system. Still further, that it was typical and in harmony with that system, is confirmed by the fact that everything capable of a metaphorical or figurative application in language is naturally most adapted to form an outward type or symbol; and instrument almusic abundantly possesses this capacity, for we have few poets indeed that do not now and again sing of their harps, lyres, or their beautiful strains.

But, what does instrumental music precisely typify? is a question not seldom put to those who oppose the modern use of the organ. We think an answer to this question is not far to seek. One method of answering it is the following:—That instrumental music, and we may add dancing, have ever among all nations been a very common method of demonstrating joy and gladness. That the Hebrews were no exception to the rule, for we find them in all great secular rejoicings in this way giving vent to the feelings of their hearts; witness, for example, the return of Saul and David from the slaughter of the Philistines, 1 Sam., xviii. 6, the greetings of Jephthah's daughter, Judges xi. 35, the reception of the prodigal in the parable of our Lord, Luke xv. 11, etc.

The application of instrumental music then to a ritualistic form of worship, to symbolize spiritual joy and gladness was easy and natural, and so we find it employed; it was in perfect keeping with such a system.

The preceding is one way of pointing out what instrumental music typifies, and we think it is quite correct so far as it goes, for instrumental music does thus typify spiritual joy; but we think there is no need for restricting its typical import to spiritual joy alone, which is but one element of praise. We prefer rather to regard instrumental music as typical of all praise, and therefore consider instrumental or outward melody as typical of the whole inward or spiritual melody of the heart; in other words, the holy joy, love adoration, etc., of a pious soul.

Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, calls praise the melody of the heart; and, we think, from the manner in which he refers to it, that, in no mistakable terms, he indicates to the Galatian church the very thing which instrumental or mere outward melody typified. He certainly knew what instrumental music

symbolized in the old dispensation; and here he lets the Galatian church know also, by the peculiar words he employs.

Instrumental music then is typical of the melody of the heart, that is, the spiritual joy, love, adoration, etc., of the saints, which we have defined as true praise.

A type can never properly be identical with the thing it typifies; song, as an instrument of general mental expression, could be no type of praise; and then its two functions of melody and of expression would be in constant danger of being confounded together; but instrumental music, being in no sense any part of true praise, is just the very thing to typify it.

In all the form of worship under the Mosaic dispensation, the inner spiritual was always concomitantly associated with the outward typical; but under the new, the outward typical has been cancelled, and we have left only the purely spiritual. In this manner, the typical instrumental music has been swept away with the dispensation to which it belonged, and we have now alone, without its concomitant type or ceremonies, the true praise itself, the melody of the heart expressed to God.

There could be no objection to this view, even supposing praise should be typified by other symbols than instrumental music; in that case, even, it would be nothing singular, as in Scripture we frequently find the same thing indicated by a variety of types.

Instrumental music then, typical of spiritual joy and of the whole melody of the heart, was in perfect keeping with the ritualistic system to which it belonged. A symbolic meaning, in various places of Scripture, is given to instrumental music, in common with the other parts of the Mosaic ceremonial.

Thus, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean" (Ps. li. 7). "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Ps. cxvi). "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense" (Ps. cxli). "I will also praise Thee with the psalter, even thy truth, O my God; unto Thee will I sing with the harp, O Thou Holy one of Israel" (Ps. lxxi. 22). We invite special attention to the preceding quotation; mark the connection between psalter and truth. May not truth mean here the play of Scriptural ideas in a pious heart, of which the psalter is typical? Other passages may be quoted, such as, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance," "Awake psalter and harp," "I will open my dark sayings on the harp," etc.

Our modern poets frequently speak of their harps and lyres in this symbolic figurative way; the symbolism, no doubt, having its origin in the harp or lyre of ancient bards.

Pro-organ men will hardly be willing to admit that David literally refers to the outward form of modern solemn worship, when he says, "Praise God with the organ and with the dance." They will require a symbolic loop-hole for the dance at least, but then the organ will escape at the same outlet.

Granting, however, that some of these passages might be understood literally, and not symbolically with a reference to the spiritual thing typified, it does not invalidate the argument against pro-organ men in the least; for supposing them literally understood, the psalmist could only encourage those living in that ritualistic age to praise in the ritualistic form; this would be no argument at all for the use of instruments in the present spiritualized system, from which they are entirely excluded.

Again, in the parable of the prodigal son,—whether the music and dancing at the prodigal's return be regarded as merely secular, or religious, it is evident that our Lord gave them a symbolical or typical implication, in perfect harmony with that we have defined, when he makes use of them to represent the joy of our heavenly Father, etc., at the sinner's return.

The literal signification is undoubtedly not employed here, nor can it be

so in the cases which we cite from the Book of Revelation; and in these cases also, it should be noticed, that instrumental music is spoken of immediately side by side with other parts of the ritualistic system of the Jewish temple, not with those of the synagogue or New Testament system.

Rev. v. 8: "And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of saints." Here the golden censer or goblet of incense, and the musical instrument of the temple, are connected together; and we think the symbolical meaning of each is made unmistakably plain. If the censer symbolizes prayer, we should say the harp symbolizes praise; for the purely material censer and harp cannot be conceived of as being literally in the hands of the purely immaterial spirits.

We refer the reader to other passages in the 8th, 14th and 15th chapters of the same book, as furnishing instances, more or less of the same character, and confirmatory of the same principle as the above.

In short, in whichever way we survey the question, it becomes evident that instrumental music, being outward and sensuous, is symbolical in its character and fully in keeping with that objective system of worship first instituted at the Fall, and wholly out of harmony with that simple, spiritualized system established by Christ at His Advent.

III. The next proposition to which we call the reader's attention is:—That instrumental music, as heretofore shewn, being symbolic and in perfect keeping with the sensuous, objective system of worship first instituted at the Fall, and being, as we shall now shew, either from the usage of the pious or direct divine injunction, employed exclusively in connection with that system, when used in solemn worship at all, was part of that dispensation and was swept away with it.

How instrumental music was to be lawfully employed may be determined from two sources: (1) from divine precept, if any exist respecting its use; and (2), that test failing to apply, from the practice of the pious so countenancing it, that we may reasonably conclude it had the divine sanction.

Probably, therefore, the best way to effect our end will be to make a general survey of those passages of Scripture which seem, in any way, to connect instrumental music with the solemn worship of God. We are not, however, to expect that we shall find all the parts of ritualistic worship in every case associated together, any more than we should expect all the parts of New Testament worship in every case present in our own day. In the present day there may be prayer offered sometimes when there is no praise, or praise and prayer without the reading and exposition of the Word, etc. So also in regard to ritualistic times, we may find sacrifices offered without the praise of either song or instrument, as in the case of Abel, or there may be prayer or the praise of song and instrument without either sacrifice or altar, or they be all associated together as at the temple. Varying circumstances, of course, affected the various elements of worship, that might be offered at the time. Neither may we expect that, in a brief history like that of the Bible, all the concomitants in every act of worship would be mentioned. These things however do not affect the general bearing of the question under consideration.

It is not necessary to touch every case, wherein instrumental music is mentioned in Scripture. It was used on occasions of secular rejoicing; we are mainly concerned with those in which it was connected with the worship of God. The first pages of the Bible, being a brief and succinct history of the times, do not of course furnish us with much account of either the praise of song or of instruments; and the song of Lamech and the instrumental music of Laban, we may reasonably suppose not to be of a religious nature, and to have nothing to do with our subject.

Coming, however, to the deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea, we find a case clearly in point. It will hardly do to describe this occasion, which we find recorded in Exod. xv, as one of a secular character; for the Lord's people engaged in a solemn act of religious worship, and one in which instrumental music was used; for while Moses and a number of the men sung the praise of God, Miriam and the women, with their instruments, answered them responsively, saying, "Sing ye to the Lord," etc.

This music attended with dances on the part of the women, is, to our mind, clearly a case of instrumental praise, outward and sensuous to be sure, but yet in perfect keeping with the ritualistic form of worship then prevailing.

As the song of Deborah was probably uttered in the camp, before the victorious Israelites returned to their homes, we are not surprised that no mention is made of either instruments of music or of dances on the part of women, as neither women nor instruments might be expected to be present with a host fresh out of battle.

The case of Jephthah's daughter, like the greeting of Saul and David on their return from the slaughter of the Philistines, was likely an act of homage to the returning victor, and had no religious worship in it.

The passage in the tenth chapter of I. Samuel, in which Saul is represented as meeting the prophets coming down from the high places with musical instruments and prophesying, just shews this much, that the sacred work and worship in which the prophets were engaged during that ritualistic age, were often attended with instrumental music.

In II. Sam. 6 chap., we meet with another distinct instance of instrumental music and dancing being used in the solemn worship of God. The occasion was solemn indeed; but, though God was displeased with Uzzah for putting profane fingers on the ark, we have no reason to believe that He was displeased with David and others that played on instruments or danced with him. This is clearly a case of worship; for we read in the 5th verse, that David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord. Again, when Michal found fault with David for so playing and dancing, he answered that "it was before the Lord." Such a mode of worship as this was fully in keeping with the ritualism of the dispensation, to which it belonged.

Still further on in Scripture, we read of David inventing new instruments of music, and of the players on instruments and of the singers being organized into something like bands and choirs in the regular services of the sanctuary.

Also when the temple of Solomon was completed, the same organization was continued, or perhaps still more perfectly developed; and from that time forward, it maintained its place in all the regular ritualistic services of the temple. We cannot agree with those who regard David as introducing this order of things without divine sanction. Though David was not permitted to build the temple, yet to him God had committed all things respecting the pattern of things in it (I. Chron. xxviii. 10-13). And as David had good reason to know from the death of Uzzah how exacting the Almighty was in regard to any breach of the divinely appointed service, we cannot suppose he would have dared to introduce such innovations without the divine sanction. Instrumental music was no innovation in ritualistic worship, but a part of it.

In the days of Hezekiah, II. Chron. xxix. 25, we find instrumental music still occupying a place in temple worship; so also when the building was restored after the captivity, in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, it still maintained its place (see Ezra iii. 10; Neh. xii. 36).

In the Book of Psalms we find the use of instrumental music in the praise of God again and again directly enjoined. The symbolical import of such language to gospel times, in which worship is purely spiritual, is quite plain; but the symbolical itself unquestionably arose of the literal, sensuous use of

instrumental music in the ritualistic symbolistic system of which it formed a part.

It is in fact needless to enumerate more passages in the Word of God, confirmatory of the use of instruments in that system, or further to shew, that they peculiarly belonged to, and were in perfect keeping with it. The heathens made the same use of instruments in the worship of their idols (see Dan. 3rd chap.) at the erection of Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold on the plain of Dura, which the three Hebrew children refused to worship. Instruments of music could not fail to be in perfect harmony with a system symbolical and objective, in which sacrifices, incense, etc., were offered, and in which altars, holy garments, candlesticks, tongs, and snuff dishes, formed important parts. As that system has been swept away, and a simpler one of a purely spiritual character substituted in its place, —and this none will dare to deny—it follows that musical instruments, like the candlesticks and other things peculiar to the ritualistic system, should pass away with it.* The dispensation, under which we now live, is that referred to so impressively by our Lord in His words to the woman of Samaria—John iv; 23: "The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

In the service of the synagogue which was the prototype of the Christian Church, and in the service of the New Testament Church itself in apostolic days and long after—as we shall shew under the subsequent head IV.—instrumental music had no place, and was never used; and this is just what we might expect. That its disuse had divine authority we cannot well question. If we grant, and grant we must, that the details of divine worship were divinely regulated under the first dispensation, we cannot deny that it must have been so in the second. God will be worshipped in His own way, and not by the inventions of men. Everything in the Mosaic ritual, by the authority of God, was minutely assigned its time and place, and the Second Commandment expressly forbids all human tampering with the divine method.

Everything then that entered into the usage of a truly pious people, though not expressly enjoined, we think, may be generally regarded as having the divine sanction, though particularly as to the details of divine worship might become more express as the light of revelation and the knowledge of the divine character increased.

If there was reason, under the old dispensation to be exact in regard to all the outward ritualistic observances, which formed its distinguishing characteristic surely, amid growing light, there is greater reason to be particular in the maintenance of that sole spirituality of worship which is the chief trait of the dispensation under which we live.

IV. Instrumental music being, as heretofore shewn, symbolic and out of keeping with a simple spiritual method of worship, we find that it was never used either in the synagogue or in the New Testament Christian Church, and is wholly without divine sanction in the worship of the second dispensation, whether looked at in the light of direct precept or in the usage of the pious.

As we have elsewhere already shewn, the synagogue was the true prototype or pattern on which the Christian Church was formed. The people, male and female, met in their synagogues on the Sabbath day, had the Word of God read and expounded to them, praised with their lips and prayed to God, just as was done afterwards in the Christian Church. The synagogue had its elders

* The argument, sometimes presented in the present day, "that as there is nothing said in the New Testament against the use of instruments in worship, therefore they may now be properly used," is an exceedingly silly one. We may just as well say, that as nothing is said in the New Testament against the dishes, tongs, priestly garments or altars of the temple, these ought to be used now in our regular services. We have not enough of popery in us to admit this.

and office-bearers and all the regular appointments of a duly organized system.

How early synagogues came into use we may not be able distinctly to tell. But just as the ritualistic or objective system of worship and teaching did its work, and began to tell in the enlightenment of the people, the true spiritual meaning of all that was taught, in its outward, objective and sensuous observances, became more and more distinctly recognized; and men, though still worshipping God in the regular ritualistic form of the temple, having caught the spiritual meaning on other occasions, as might be expected, dropped the mere outward rites and ceremonies and worshipped God in the true spiritualized form of the synagogue. The time when synagogues came first into use is not a matter of special importance to the discussion of this question, although we have reason to believe that they were as early as the days of David or Asaph, for the 74th Psalm speaks of all the synagogues of the land being destroyed by the wicked. Other passages might be quoted as favouring the same view, but very likely the number of synagogues received a marked increase after, or at the captivity, as the difficulty of worshipping God ritualistically in a foreign land no doubt led the pious captives more into the practice of worshipping God in the spiritualized form of the synagogue. After the captivity it is certain that very many synagogues were built all over Palestine, and a large number in even the city of Jerusalem itself.

Now the most careful examination of the Word of God, whether looked at in the form of divine precept, or the recorded usage of the pious, fails to shew that instrumental music was ever used in any form in the worship of the synagogue, while there is much to shew that divine sanction was against its use there. The people were familiar with the use of instruments of music in the temple, and had they regarded them as necessary concomitants of worship in all cases, they would no doubt have used them in their synagogues. The worshipper of the synagogue was quite familiar with the Psalms of David; and these, we know, in many places incite the praise of God by instruments, which injunctions, if the people did not understand these passages symbolically, they would surely be willing enough and rich enough to buy a harp, or, at least a penny whistle, and make an attempt to comply with literally.

But the worshippers of the synagogue neither played nor danced. They worshipped God in spirit and in truth. To cast discredit upon the synagogue as a divine institution, will hardly do, since the Lord honoured it by His presence and preaching, and set up His Church afterwards on its model (Luke iv. 16; John xviii. 20; Luke iv. 44; Act. xiii. 5). The system was born of Himself, it had been advancing from infancy to maturity, prior to His coming, and at His advent had come to its majority, and was installed in office by Himself; while the preceding ritualistic system was superannuated and set aside.

In the synagogue there were neither sacrifices nor incense, altars nor censers, six-branched candlesticks nor musical instruments; and we defy any examination of Scripture passages to shew that the use of any such things was countenanced within it. We read, however, of Ezra (Neh. viii.) reading and expounding the Scriptures to a synagogue of men and women from a pulpit of wood, and of all the people bowing their heads and worshipping, but of no musical instruments.

Again, looking at the bearing of instrumental music in connection with the New Testament or Christian dispensation, the proofs of the impropriety (not to say unlawfulness) of its use in the spiritual worship of the present day, become clearer and clearer. No man of ordinary enlightenment will deny that the ritualistic dispensation was swept away by our Lord, and made to give place to that system of simple spiritual worship which was instituted by Him.

That sacrifices, incense, altars, instrumental music, and all that was essen-

tially and peculiarly in keeping with the first dispensation must pass away with it. cannot be consistently denied, any more than that the stem, branches, etc., of a tree must partake of the general destruction in the upheaval of its roots.

Again, as confirmatory of this view, all that we learn from the New Testament, either in the form of direct precept or of the practice of the Christian Church, not only gives no countenance to the use of instrumental music in praise, but distinctly implies its discontinuance.

That nothing is said in the New Testament, as giving direct countenance to its use in praise, even its most earnest advocates must be content to admit. But New Testament testimony goes much further than this; it distinctly implies its disuse. The Psalms of David were much used in the praise of the New Testament Church, and these psalms in many places, symbolically incite to the use of instruments, which, if the early Christians understood in the literal signification, they could scarcely fail to comply, in their praise, with so easy and so pleasant a requirement. And yet, amid the vast amount of direct precept which we have in the New Testament bearing on the worship of that Church, and in the very full account which we have of all its practices, there is nothing to be found countenancing the praise of God by instruments. We have a full account about the preaching of early Christians, their prayers and of their praise in song, but nothing about their use of musical instruments. Were the worshippers of that day indeed so poor, that none of them could buy a harp, or a flute, or a stand of bagpipes, which, I understand, is like the organ of that day.

Then amid the frequent exhortations of the apostles to the people to praise God in song, is it not singular that had they regarded instrumental music as an element of Christian praise, they should never once mention it? David, under the dispensation of his day, incites to its use often. Is it possible that they could be less zealous than he, provided it was an element of praise in the system of worship which they were instrumental in setting up? For our part we have no hesitation in believing that all instrumental music was distinctly rejected from the worship of the Christian Church in common with all the ritualistic observances of the Mosaic dispensation. This opinion is, we think, abundantly sustained in the following quotations from the New Testament Scriptures, and we may add also from the writings of the early fathers.

When the Lord's Supper of the New Testament was instituted, we read that after our Lord and His disciples had sung a hymn or psalm they went out to the mount of Olives; nothing about instrumental music here. Also the apostle Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, quotes a passage in the 22nd Psalm, prophetic of the manner of praise which should be established in gospel times: "In the midst of the church will I sing praise (*hallel*) unto Thee." Again in the 5th chapter of Ephesians, 19th verse, mark the following apostolic directory of praise, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to God." Also, Col. iii. 16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Why did not the apostle in these very full directories say something about instrumental music at least, if not the dance. Were we advocates of the organ we should be utterly surprised at this omission; for it cannot but be observed that the apostle is here exceedingly minute as to both the manner and the quality of the praise that should be rendered to God. A directory of praise in Old Testament ritualistic worship would certainly have made no such omission.

We are told in Acts 2nd chapter, 46 verse, "That the disciples continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people;" nothing about playing or dancing here, not-

withstanding all their gladness. We may excuse Paul and Silas for praying and merely singing praise to God in the Philippian prison at midnight (Acts xvi. 25), as their peculiar circumstances on the occasion might be urged by our pro-organ brethren as precluding the use of musical instruments. The apostle James in his epistle, chap. 5, verse 13, says: "Is any merry, let him sing psalms;" were we believers in instrumental music we should think this a suitable occasion for the apostle to recommend the use of the organ and the timbrel, we will not say "dance," for it would sound like profanity in such a connection.

We have referred elsewhere to certain passages in the Book of Revelation, which speak of the glorified saints in heaven using harps, etc.; but these passages also speak of altars, incense, etc. They are clearly symbolical in their signification, and we believe are generally so understood; but lest any should insist that these passages actually imply the literal use of instruments, we would reply that as we believe the glorified to be spirits and immaterial, we cannot conceive the possibility of pure spirits handling, and evoking music in this way from, instruments that are purely material. If the harps spoken of are neither material nor of man's device, but spiritual, then the best spiritual harp of all is the human heart; and we believe it is mainly the melody of this instrument that is implied in the symbolical language of these passages, referred to, in the Book of Revelation.

The testimony derived from the early Christian fathers is as fatal to the use of instrumental music in the Christian Church as that of the New Testament itself.

Barnabas, writing about the close of the first century, says with reference to praise and worship in general, "Thou shalt preserve what thou hast received, neither adding thereunto nor taking therefrom." He evidently does not believe in any unauthorized additions to the forms of worship instituted by Christ.

The testimony of Justin Martyr on this subject is very clear. He was born in Palestine about the close of the first century. He published a catechism for the use of the Jewish and Gentile Christians, and in this, referring to the practices of the ancient economy in contrast with those of the new, he says: "Plain singing is not childish, but only the singing with lifeless organs, with dancing and cymbals, etc., whence" (says he), "the use of such instruments and other things fit for children is laid aside, and plain singing only retained." This good man confirmed his testimony with his blood.

Clement and Tertullian, both of the second century, gave like testimony as to their disuse in their day. The former declares, that "musical instruments in the worship of God are unfit for rational creatures," and says, "we praise God as we till our lands; we sing psalms as we are sailing; the Christian is persuaded that God hears everything, not the voice only, but the thoughts." The latter says (*De Corona*) that "while the people were assembling, they were in the practice of singing some verses out of the psalms or hymns of David."

Augustine, born A.D. 354, in his work *De Civitate Dei*, expresses a fear that he had too often enjoyed the singing of praise simply as a gratification to his ears. He mentions a like fear on the part of Athanasius, who lived about the same time. Both of these fathers were certainly not accustomed to hear an organ used in praise, or it would here have been referred to, and it is just as sure that they would not have approved of its use, as it ministers to the gratification of the ear alone—that of which they were jealous.

Basil, born about A.D. 328, thought musical instruments unprofitable and hurtful in the service of song, and calls them the inventions of Jubal of the race of Cain. He says, at page 955 of one of his works, "In such vain acts as the playing on the harp or pipe as soon as the action ceases the work itself vanishes, so that really, according to the apostle's expression, the end of those things is destruction."

Pliny, Roman governor of Bythinia, about the end of the first century, in his famous letter to the Emperor Trajan, gives a full account of the practices of the Christians abounding in these parts, and asks his master's advice as to how he shall deal with these sects. He says, that "they rose before light and sung by times a hymn or psalm to Christ as to God." He makes no mention of instruments of music being used by them.

Chrysostom, born at Antioch about 354, says of his own times, that "psalms were sung on the Lord's days according to a custom handed down from the fathers." In expounding the 149th Psalm, he says, that "now, instead of organs, Christians must use their body to praise God."

Isidore, A.D. 450, says, that "instrumental music was only allowed to the Jews by the Almighty in a way of condescension to their childishness."

In Book II., Epistle 176, he says, "if God bore with bloody sacrifices because of man's childishness at that time, why should you wonder He bore with the music of a harp and a psaltery."

The apostolic constitutions, supposed by Dr. Eadie to have been compiled in the eastern Church, about the beginning of the fourth century, are of some value as shewing the practice of the eastern Church. In Book VIII., chapter 82, it is said, "if any come to the mystery of godliness, being a player on a pipe, a lute, or a harp, let him leave it off or be rejected."

We need make no more extracts from the early Christian fathers. It was only as piety declined, and corruption and ignorance crept into the Christian Church, in after ages, that instrumental music began to be used in praise. Neander says the innovation crept in about the eighth century, or at least, made little headway till then.

Roman Catholic writers affirm, that in the year A.D. 660, Pope Vitalian introduced organs into the churches to give greater *eclat* to religious ceremonies.

At the Reformation of the 16th century, however, there was a very general rejection of instrumental music and all the childish mummeries with which it had associated in the solemn worship of God. At the first convention of the Church of England in Elizabeth's time (1562), instrumental music was rejected from worship by the vote of the majority.

We know also, that the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in their "Directory of Worship," admitted only of plain singing in praise. In the Presbyterian Churches of both Scotland and Ireland, till lately, instrumental music has never since their first establishment been permitted in any form. Nor indeed in many cases has it been countenanced by our Baptist or Methodist brethren. The Puritans of England and of America also were directly opposed to its use.

Furthermore, to give the names of all the learned, good, and great men of modern times that have opposed the use of musical instruments in worship, would involve a much longer list of names than we are here prepared to give. Suffice it to say, that Luther, Melancthon, Beza, Calvin, Knox, and indeed almost all the Reformers to a man, rejected this superficial and childish aid to Christian praise.

The Reformers were indeed, in this case, the very men most capable of judging; for in digging through a vast mass of popish superstition and mummery to the foundation of the apostles and prophets, they had just the very best means of seeing what belonged to the true Christian Church and what did not.

The list of names opposed to instrumental music in praise might be indefinitely added to by a reference to still later times; indeed, we know of few writers who have much to say in favour of instrumental music in worship, at least much that would convince a truly conscientious person, on scriptural authority, of the propriety of its use.

We think the writings of Prof. Wallace but small exception to the foregoing statement, for we believe they are capable only of convincing a people but only

too easy to be persuaded, and more addicted to the sensuous than the spiritual.

In fact, at the present day, we think there is very little argument used in behalf of the organ, and just as little required; the people have a hankering after it; and it is enough to many just to hear that organs are being introduced elsewhere, and that they will "draw."

In conclusion, we would say that we would not like to call the use of instrumental music in Christian praise a positive sin; but we do most assuredly regret the marked tendency of the present day to use it.

This sliding backward to the ritualistic and sensuous observances of a former dispensation, indicates a decline of spiritual discernment, as to what constitutes the true worship of the dispensation under which we live.

Alas! are we still such children or so carnal in our tastes that these things should be deemed necessary in order to "draw," or to make the worship of God pleasant, or, at least, tolerable? We shall leave this question for others to answer.

REMARKS ON THE GENERAL TENDENCIES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA IN THE PRESENT DAY.

THE tendencies of the day are too little towards enlightened piety and too much towards sensuous or sensational superficialities. We change, but all our changes are not improvements. The piety of the day is not winnowed or purged with the fires of persecution. We cannot also fail to note that the most earnest promoters of sensational innovations are chiefly to be found among the young and inexperienced. This makes the duty all the more imperative, on the part of those more enlightened, by means of sound doctrinal teaching, illustrated with a godly walk and conversation, to present to their juniors a better Bible standard. We rejoice to know that we live in an age of great religious revivals; but such an age pre-eminently demands, on our part, faithful training and the dissemination of sound doctrine, so that the young Church, daily augmenting, may be well built up in the faith. The time when God sows most wheat is just the time when Satan sows most tares. A sowing time should always be closely followed by a weeding time. The babes of Christ need to be fed with the sincere milk of the Word, and the adults with strong meat, if we would avoid that shallow, spurious type of Christianity which is too often only antecedent to ritualism, rationalism, or open infidelity.

A demand all too common, in the present day, is for young and inexperienced pastors, from the supposition that fire, earnestness, and a forward progressive spirit are more likely to be found at that age than at any other. The above qualities (even supposing we grant them to be peculiar to youth, which we do not) will never make up for that of experience, breadth, and greater soundness in the faith which are matured with age. Also, it does not follow that years will make a man in the truest scriptural sense less earnest, progressive, or successful.

It pains us to think, that a hoary head may be a crown of glory anywhere else than in the pulpit; and yet we find from time to time, a man of ripe piety, profound knowledge, and rich experience matured in a long course of pastoral service, coolly set aside from the choice of a congregation, and the youth, raw, ardent, but untried, fresh from the school of the prophets, elected in preference by a large majority, as the pastor of the congregation; his earnestness is supposed to make up for all he lacks in experience. Now, while many of our most loved and cherished personal friends are among the young pastors of the Church, whom we could not bear to slight, at the same time we cannot but sincerely regret that so many aged ministers should be treated in the above fashion, not a few of whom become superannuated, from necessity, rather than choice. The term elder, applied to the Christian minister, thus becomes a misnomer; and the Church, under a mistaken notion that age unfits for the pastorate, often passes by a preaching power nowise impaired, and a wisdom and maturity of experience, that she ought to value as great riches and a bright ornament.

While speaking of the church methods of the present day, we can hardly allow this opportunity to pass without affirming our belief that there is an attempt, on her part, to do too much church work within church walls.

This charge, strange as it may seem, is not altogether without foundation. The Sabbath school, instead of being as it was first intended to be, a help merely to the parent in the teaching and training of his children, has really, in many cases, taken the work, or as we may rather say, crowded it (from want of time on the Sabbath) out of the parent's hands.

For ourselves, we affirm, and we judge our experience to be that of thousands, that we believe that in boyhood we drank in more knowledge of Christian doctrine and duty, twice told over, on the Sabbath afternoon or evening at the parental fireside than, at that age, we did from either the preaching of the pulpit or the teaching of the Sabbath school.

The family circle on the Sabbath afternoon or evening was the grand school of Scripture Lesson, Shorter Catechism, Psalms and Paraphrases, wherein in many cases, all within the house, from the hired man down to the toddler in his pinafore, had to take a part. We have never seen a Sabbath school yet that in real efficiency could even approach, far less effectively supplant, such a system, both as to its intellectual and moral effects on all concerned.

This home institute made Bible scholars of both parents and children; and we venture to say that the theological student in his early rounds, has often had his theological knowledge sorely tried, and not seldom clarified, by an interview with some of the old giant products of this institute, now only too much ignored and neglected.

So far as our towns and villages are concerned, the morning and evening services of the church, with the Sabbath school of the afternoon, practically crowd the family institute out of existence. It may be said that parents should choose another day for home teaching, but this to very many is impossible from want of time; and parents with such excuse before them, are generally only too willing to devolve this part of their duty on the Sabbath school teacher.

We highly value the Sabbath school; but we say, by all means let it be held at such hours as not to interfere with the family institute, which is of more importance than itself. When the Sabbath school occupies a duly subordinate connection with the home institute, we shall say, here is progress, but not till then.

In short, we notice not a few changes and tendencies in the present day that are not characteristic of progress in the truest spiritual sense.

We have no end of means tried to raise money for the support of the Church. Week after week we read of tea-meetings, socials, bazaars, etc., by which sums varying from fifty to one hundred dollars are raised in aid of gospel ends; and the promoters of these things claim and receive some laudation as having accomplished big things.

A principle covertly recognized in most of these entertainments is that parties contributing on such occasions are not directly benefited by gospel ordinances, and they must needs get the worth of their money by some other means, viz., eating, drinking, or social enjoyment. We admit the Church has become wonderfully inventive in this respect.

In order to raise money for the cause of Christ, we sell indulgences, lawful enough to be sure, but none the less indulgences to the flesh for all that, just as if the cause of Christ could present no higher claim for our liberality than some common object of charity. We wish we could hear of more cases in which Christian people, disowning the use of such idle clap-trap, are not ashamed to put their hands into their pockets, and give avowedly and directly to the support of that cause which blesses them for time and eternity. If this might not indeed be very great progress, it would not at least be declension. Our forefathers gave up their lives and their all for Christ; we have difficulty in giving even a little of our means; and for part of that even, we must have some adequate return in the form of edibles, drinks, or social enjoyment. Is this progress? It may be said, perhaps, that these social tea-meetings are more for the object of promoting Christian fellowship among the people than for raising money. Very good, if that is their chief end; but, in many cases, we are given to understand very distinctly in their announcement that they are intended to raise funds for the church.

We might notice also other departures from the church usages of the past, which, though some may reckon them unimportant, are of very questionable utility. We are changing in our postures during praise and prayer. Our singers claim that they can sing better standing than sitting; a claim, however, that most of them forego when they come together during the week to practise. Our church sessions yielding to this claim, the result is that we are now invited to stand always in praise. As might be expected from this indiscriminating practice, many of our people, infirm or tired from long travel, being unable to stand during both praise and prayer, resort to the unscriptural habit of sitting during the latter. Here we have change but not scriptural progress. If our choirs are bound to have an erect position as the most favourable to singing, let there at least be some wise discrimination made in regard to the infirm or tired of the flock that would prefer much rather to sit. We do not forget, however, that as a result of this change, while most of our people stand during praise, not a few of both old and young sit during prayer; and, for our part, we would much rather see the scriptural attitude of prayer maintained, and the people sit during singing in the old-fashioned way. If our singers aim purely at melodious effect, it may or may not be advantageous for them to stand; but if they wish to present the true offering of the heart, of which song is the mere outward expression, they may, perhaps, find the sitting posture quite adequate.

We would now close these remarks with some observations on the characteristics of modern preaching. Much excellent preaching there is in the present day, we cordially admit. A great deal of thorough scriptural exposition, and a large amount of sound evangelical doctrine, well illustrated, is poured from our pulpits from week to week.

In not a few cases, however, the supply of either is extremely limited, and what there is, is largely diluted. Racy and pathetic anecdotes (*à la* Moody), culminating in a good deal of sensuous feeling, which the inexperienced are apt to mistake as religious, has become too much the order of the day; and preaching of this kind is doubtlessly not a little sought after and enjoyed. "I like a sermon that brings tears to my eyes," is a remark that we hear from time to time. Most pastors, we dare say, would like to deliver sermons leading to this effect, provided the tears were tears of penitence or of some other truly religious affection; but if the tears sought after are those of only mere sentimental feeling, alas, we say, for the piety that can live on such swill.

We think a proper aim of the pulpit would be to lead to a better spiritual discernment in the pews, so that mere natural feeling may never be mistaken for pure religious affection. Doctrinal preaching we must have, and sound doctrine and plenty of it, at that, if we would avoid that snail type of Christianity which is all flesh and no bones. That kind of religion may do in darkness or among the clouds, but it soon melts in the sunlight, and leaves behind it only a trail of slime.

Sound exposition and sound doctrine, well illustrated, and brought home to the heart by the might of the Spirit, is that type of preaching which alone is calculated to awaken the spiritually dead, feed the babes, and build up and nourish full-grown Christian manhood.

